



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
William Francis Galvin
Secretary of the Commonwealth

Regulation Filing *To be completed by filing agency*

CHAPTER NUMBER: 452 CMR 1.00

CHAPTER TITLE: Adjudicatory Rules

AGENCY: Department of Industrial Accidents

SUMMARY OF REGULATION: *State the general requirements and purposes of this regulation.*

The regulations are proposed in order to further the efficiency of the adjudicatory proceedings in the division of dispute resolution by eliminating needless litigation stemming from issues of a de minimus nature, by clarifying and making divergent practices uniform, and by codifying reviewing board and court decisions, thereby saving money for all participants in the system as well as the department itself.

REGULATORY AUTHORITY: G. L. c. 152, sec. 5

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Compliance with M.G.L. c. 30A

EMERGENCY ADOPTION - *if this regulation is adopted as an emergency, state the nature of the emergency.*

PRIOR NOTIFICATION AND/OR APPROVAL - *If prior notification to and/or approval of the Governor, Legislature or others was required, list each notification, and/or approval and date, including notice to the Local Government Advisory Commission.*

Janet Fogel, Administration and Finance, 9/05/2007

PUBLIC REVIEW - *M.G.L. c. 30A sections 2 and/or 3 requires notice of the hearing or comment period be filed with the Secretary of the Commonwealth, published in appropriate newspapers, and sent to persons to whom specific notice must be given at least 21 days prior to such hearing or comment period.*

Date of public hearing or comment period: 9/28/2007

FISCAL EFFECT - *Estimate the fiscal effect of the public and private sectors.*

For the first and second year: N/A

For the first five years: N/A

No fiscal effect: Proposals generally result in reduction of litigation costs.

SMALL BUSINESS IMPACT - *State the impact of this regulation on small business. Include a description of reporting, record keeping and other compliance requirements as well as the appropriateness of performance versus design standards and whether this regulation duplicates or conflicts with any other regulation. If the purpose of this regulation is to set rates for the state, this section does not apply.*

N/A

CODE OF MASSACHUSETTS REGULATIONS INDEX - *List key subjects that are relevant to this regulation:*
Workers' Compensation, Adjudicatory Proceedings, Dispute Resolution

PROMULGATION - *State the action taken by this regulation and its effect on existing provisions of the Code of Massachusetts Regulations (CMR) or repeal, replace or amend. List by CMR number:*

The regulations add to, replace or amend certain provisions of 452 CMR 1.02 (Definitions), 1.06 (Modification or Discontinuance of Compensation), 1.07 (Claims and Complaints), 1.09 (Assignment to Division of Dispute Resolution), 1.10 (Conferences), 1.11 (

ATTESTATION - *The regulation described herein and attached hereto is a true copy of the regulation adopted by this agency.* ATTEST:

SIGNATURE: Martine Corwell, Senior Judge DATE: Feb 28, 2008

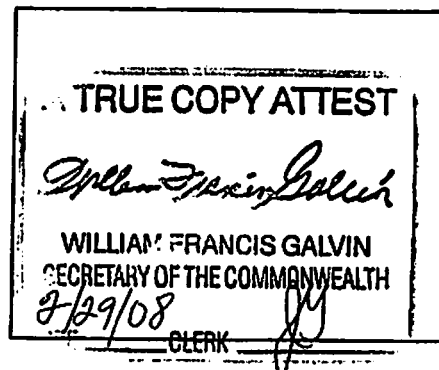
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CODE OF MASSACHUSETTS REGULATIONS

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452 CMR: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS

Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
452 CMR 1.00: ADJUDICATORY RULES	3
Section 1.01: Scope and Authority	3
Section 1.02: Definitions	3
Section 1.03: Employer's Report of Injury	5
Section 1.04: Insurer's Notice of Refusal to Pay Compensation	6
Section 1.05: Payment of Compensation	6
Section 1.06: Modification or Discontinuance of Compensation	6
Section 1.07: Claims and Complaints	7
Section 1.08: Conciliation	10
Section 1.09: Assignment to Division of Dispute Resolution	11
Section 1.10: Conferences	12
Section 1.11: Hearings	13
Section 1.12: Discovery and Depositions	14
Section 1.13: Medical Reports and Records	16
Section 1.14: Impartial Physicians	16
Section 1.15: Reviewing Board	17
Section 1.16: Copies of Orders, Decisions, and Memoranda of Agreements	19
Section 1.17: <i>Ex Parte</i> Communications	19
Section 1.18: Practice Before the Department	19
Section 1.19: Payment of Attorneys' Fees	20
Section 1.20: Joinder	20.1
Section 1.21: Third Party Liability	20.1
Section 1.23: Amendments to Claims and Complaints	20.2
Section 1.24: Recoupment of Overpayment	20.2
(452 CMR 2.00: RESERVED)	21
452 CMR 3.00: WORKERS' COMPENSATION TRUST FUND	23
Section 3.01: Scope and Authority	23
Section 3.02: Payment of Benefits for Disabilities Subject to Latency	23
Section 3.03: Reimbursement of Cost of Living Adjustments	23
Section 3.04: Claims involving Uninsured Employers	24
Section 3.05: Reimbursement of Benefits for Second Injuries	25
452 CMR 4.00 VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION	27
Section 4.01: Scope and Authority	27
Section 4.02: Definitions	27
Section 4.03: Qualifications and Standards of Providers	28
Section 4.04: Evaluation of Providers	29
Section 4.05: Initial Client Interview	29
Section 4.06: Notice to Insurer of Suitability	30
Section 4.07: Design of Individual Written Rehabilitation Program	30
Section 4.08: Amendment, Suspension or Termination of Rehabilitation Program	31
Section 4.09: Notification and Authorization to Insurers Relative to Mandatory Meeting and Refusal of Vocational Services	31
Section 4.10: OEVR Consent to Lump Sum Settlements	32
Section 4.11: OEVR Director and Rehabilitation Review Officers	32

452 CMR: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS

Table of Contents (continued)

	<u>Page</u>
452 CMR 5.00: SELF INSURERS	33
Section 5.01: Scope and Authority	33
Section 5.02: Licensing of Self Insurers	33
Section 5.03: Reinsurance, Surety Bond, and Securities Deposit	34
Section 5.04: Criteria for Self Insurance	34
Section 5.05: Parent and Subsidiary Corporations as Self Insurers	35
Section 5.06: Cessation of Business as a Self Insurer	35
Section 5.07: Insurer and Self-Insurer Claims Practices	35
Section 5.08: Revocation or Denial of Renewal of Self Insurance License	35
Section 5.09: Appeals Process	36
452 CMR 6.00: UTILIZATION REVIEW AND QUALITY ASSESSMENT	37
Section 6.01: Scope and Authority	37
Section 6.02: Definitions	37
Section 6.03: Preferred Provider Arrangements under Workers' Compensation	39
Section 6.04: Utilization Review by Insurers	39
Section 6.05: Utilization Reporting	41
Section 6.06: Treatment Guideline and Review Criteria Development	41
Section 6.07: Quality Assessment and Enforcement	42
452 CMR 7.00: PRACTICES BY INSURERS	43
Section 7.01: Scope and Authority	43
Section 7.02: Definitions	43
Section 7.03: Collection of Trust Fund Assessments	43
Section 7.04: Questionable Claims Handling Techniques/Patterns of Unreasonably Controverting Claims	43
452 CMR 8.00: OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS	45
Section 8.01: Scope and Authority	45
Section 8.02: Definitions	45
Section 8.03: Issuance of Stop Work Orders	46
Section 8.04: Appeal of a Stop Work Order	46
Section 8.05: Fines	46
Section 8.06: Exemption of Corporate Officers or Directors	46
Section 8.07: Workers' Compensation Policies for Sole Proprietors	48

452 CMR: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS

452 CMR 1.00: ADJUDICATORY RULES

Section

- 1.01: Scope and Authority
- 1.02: Definitions
- 1.03: Employer's Report of Injury
- 1.04: Insurer's Notice of Refusal to Pay Compensation
- 1.05: Payment of Compensation
- 1.06: Modification or Discontinuance of Compensation
- 1.07: Claims and Complaints
- 1.08: Conciliation
- 1.09: Assignment to Division of Dispute Resolution
- 1.10: Conferences
- 1.11: Hearings
- 1.12: Discovery and Depositions
- 1.13: Medical Reports and Records
- 1.14: Impartial Physicians
- 1.15: Reviewing Board
- 1.16: Copies of Orders, Decisions, and Memoranda of Agreements
- 1.17: *Ex Parte* Communications
- 1.18: Practice Before the Department
- 1.19: Payment of Attorneys' Fees
- 1.20: Joinder
- 1.21: Third Party Liability
- 1.23: Amendments to Claims and Complaints
- 1.24: Recoupment of Overpayment

1.01: Scope and Authority

452 CMR 1.00 is promulgated pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152, § 5 for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of M.G.L. c. 152. Except where it would violate justice or equity to do so, 452 CMR 1.00 shall apply to all claims and complaints before the Department of Industrial Accidents, irrespective of the date of injury, except for 452 CMR 1.19(1) through (7), which shall apply only to claims and complaints regarding injuries arising on or after November 1, 1986.

1.02: Definitions

Action Against a Third Person as used in M.G.L. c. 152, § 41, shall be limited to actions involving injuries for which compensation has been paid or claimed.

Actual Employment as used in M.G.L. c. 152 and 452 CMR 1.00 shall include any job for which the employee receives earnings.

Additional Compensation as used in M.G.L. c. 152, § 8(5), shall mean compensation due pursuant to an order or decision finding that prior compensation was illegally discontinued.

Advocate on Behalf of Any Party as used in M.G.L. c. 152, § 10B, shall mean any person representing a party in any proceeding before the Industrial Accident Board or Reviewing Board, except where the sole consideration for the representation of any such party is in the form of regular wages or salary from employment with a self-insurer, labor organization, employee association, the Commonwealth or any of its political subdivisions, or any entity which receives no consideration in the form of premiums or fees for services relating to the representation of parties before the Industrial Accident Board or Reviewing Board.

452 CMR: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS

1.02: continued

All Payments Due an Employee as used in M.G.L. c. 152, § 8(1), shall mean, in regard to past due or retroactive benefits only, the sum certain payable to the employee after the determination of the amount due a lien holder in satisfaction of any lien filed pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152, § 46A. Unless otherwise agreed, the parties shall make reasonable efforts to expedite the determination of the amount due the M.G.L. c. 152, § 46A lien holder, but in no event shall payment be delayed beyond 60 days of the insurer's receipt of the order, decision, arbitrator's decision, approved lump sum or other agreement indicating that such payments are required to be made. All other payments due an employee shall be made by the insurer within the timeframe set forth in M.G.L. c. 152, § 8(1).

Amount Payable to the Employee Within the First Month from the Date of the Voluntary Payment, Order or Decision as used in M.G.L. c. 152, § 13A(10), shall mean any compensation due the employee under the terms of the voluntary payment, order or decision pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152, § 36 or § 36A and any future weekly benefits pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152 due the employee for the first 30 days subsequent to the date of the execution of a voluntary payment or the issuance of an order or decision.

Average Weekly Wage in the Commonwealth as used in M.G.L. c. 152 and 450 CMR 1.00, shall be the wage, as calculated pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152, § 1(9), on or most nearly previous to the applicable date.

Cash Award as used in M.G.L. c. 152, § 13A(10), shall mean any specific compensation benefits payable under M.G.L. c. 152, § 36 or § 36A and any weekly benefits payable under M.G.L. c. 152 of an amount that exceeds the weekly amount being paid the employee for the week immediately prior to the date of the voluntary payment, order or decision.

Disputes Over Medical Issues as used in M.G.L. c. 152, § 11A(2), shall not include any case in which:

- (a) the parties disagree solely regarding the entitlement to weekly benefits concerning a specific period or periods of disability, or death which occurred prior to the hearing scheduled pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152, § 11;
- (b) the parties disagree regarding the liability of the named insurer for any claimed injury; provided, however, that the parties agree that no impartial physician's report is required;
- (c) the parties agree upon both the nature of the impairment and the causal relationship between the impairment and the employment; provided, however, that the parties agree that no impartial physician's report is required.
- (d) based upon the information submitted at a Conference pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152, § 10A, the administrative judge determines that there is no dispute over medical issues. The judge's determination, and reasons therefor, shall be stated in the M.G.L. c. 152, § 10A Conference order.

Experience Modified Insured as used in M.G.L. c. 152, § 48(1), shall mean any named employer in a proposed lump sum settlement which has an experience modification in effect at the time of the lump sum settlement that, under the terms of a rating plan approved by the commissioner of insurance, could be affected by the proposed lump sum settlement.

Factual Basis for an Insurer's Refusal to Pay Compensation as used in M.G.L. c. 152, §§ 7 and 8, shall be a short and plain statement of the specific facts supporting the grounds for said refusal.

Filed as used in M.G.L. c. 152, §§ 10A and 11C and as used in 452 CMR 1.11(1) and 1.15(1) shall mean placement of the appeal in the mail to the Department postmarked no later than midnight on the 14th day when appealing a conference order under M.G.L. c. 152, § 10A, and the 30th day when appealing the decision of an administrative judge pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152, § 11C.

Grounds for an Insurer's Refusal to Pay Compensation as used in M.G.L. c. 152, §§ 7 and 8, shall mean any defense available under M.G.L. c. 152, including but not limited to:

- (a) lack of jurisdiction;
- (b) late notice;

452 CMR: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS

1.02: continued

- (c) late claim;
- (d) no personal injury;
- (e) no injury arising out of and in the course of employment;
- (f) no disability; and
- (g) no causal relation between personal injury and disability.

Hearing as used in M.G.L. c. 152, § 11A(2), shall be restricted to proceedings subsequent to a conference concerning medical disputes as herein defined. All other hearings shall be held in accordance with M.G.L. c. 152, § 11 and 452 CMR 1.00.

Hospitalization Expenses as used in M.G.L. c. 152, § 13(1), shall mean any charges for in-patient hospital services adjudged compensable under M.G.L. c. 152.

Interest as used in as used in M.G.L. c. 152, § 50, shall be calculated using the Department-provided formula available on its website. The parties may utilize other formulas but when a discrepancy exists the amount of interest in the Department formula will prevail for all purposes.

Insurer as used in M.G.L. c. 152, § 45 shall include the Workers' Compensation Trust Fund.

Mid-term Notice of Cancellation as used in M.G.L. c. 152, § 55A, shall mean any notice of policy discontinuance during the term of the policy where such discontinuance is initiated by the insurer, and shall not include discontinuances initiated by insureds.

Necessary Expenses as used in M.G.L. c. 152, § 13A, shall mean all reasonable out-of-pocket costs, as the Department may set, to a claimant's attorney incurred by said attorney in prosecuting a claim for benefits or contesting a complaint filed by the insurer, including the cost of obtaining relevant medical records, doctor's reports, private investigator fees, constable charges, expert witness charges, interpreter fees and scientific testing costs, but specifically excluding telephone expenses, parking fees, postage, stationery, photocopies, meals, automobile expenses, and ordinary legal office overhead. Filing fees and impartial physician deposition costs required by M.G.L. c. 152, § 11A, which are paid by claimant's counsel, shall not be submitted as necessary expenses but shall be reimbursable directly from the insurer against whom the claimant prevails at hearing.

180 Day Period as used in M.G.L. c. 152, §§ 8(1) and 8(6), shall mean the 180 day period beginning on the commencement of disability.

Payment of Compensation as used in M.G.L. c. 152, § 41, shall include payments made without prejudice to the rights of either party.

Setting in Which the Service is Administered as used in M.G.L. c. 152, § 13(1) shall mean the physical location, including the jurisdiction and the type of facility, in which any health care service other than in-patient hospital service is administered.

Toll as used in M.G.L. c. 152, § 41, shall mean permanently satisfies.

1.03: Employer's Report of Injury

(1) An employer who is aggrieved by an assessment of a fine imposed for a violation under the provisions of M.G.L. c. 152, § 6, may seek an administrative review by the Director of Claims Administration or his or her designee within 30 days of the issuance of the fine and shall include any relevant documentation with such request. Said director shall make a finding within 30 days of receipt of a documented request for review.

(2) An employer who is aggrieved by the finding of said director shall have 14 days from receipt of said finding to request a hearing before the Commissioner or his designee, who shall schedule such hearing in Boston within 30 days of receipt of such request. At the hearing said employer shall be given the right to be represented by counsel, to call witnesses, and to question the Director of Claims Administration or his designee. The hearing shall not be subject to rules of evidence.

452 CMR: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS

1.03: continued

- (3) No employer shall be granted more than one administrative review for any alleged work-related injury.

1.04: Insurer's Notice of Refusal to Pay Compensation

Subject to the provisions of M.G.L. c. 152, § 7(1) and 8(1), as to newly discovered evidence, no grounds for refusal to pay compensation shall be allowed as a defense unless the insurer's notice of refusal contains a statement of the factual basis supporting such grounds. No ground or factual basis sought to be raised by an insurer on newly discovered evidence shall be allowed as a defense unless the insurer reports each such ground or factual basis to the injured employee and the Department not less than five working days before any conference or hearing, provided that if such evidence is not in fact discovered until a time within such five day period, a continuance may be granted if requested by the insurer at the conference or hearing. When such a continuance is granted, the administrative judge shall have the discretion to order payment of compensation without prejudice until the date of the continued conference or hearing, if justice or equity requires it.

1.05: Payment of Compensation

- (1) When an insurer makes payment of benefits in a timely fashion it shall file a memorandum of payment on a form prescribed by the Department within 30 calendar days of such insurer's receipt of an employer's first report or an initial written claim for weekly benefits on a form prescribed by the Department, whichever is received first.
- (2) When an insurer and an injured employee reach an agreement in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. c. 152, § 19, a memorandum thereof on a form prescribed by the Department, signed by the parties, shall be filed with the Department within seven days thereof.
- (3) Orders, decisions, arbitrator's decisions and agreements for compensation are not divisible and failure to comply with all relevant terms thereof in a timely fashion shall, where applicable, constitute a violation under M.G.L. c. 152, § 8(1).

1.06: Modification or Discontinuance of Compensation

- (1) Whenever the insurer or insured deems the employee to have refused to submit to, or in some way to have obstructed, a medical examination scheduled pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152, §§ 45 or 11A, it shall be entitled to suspend weekly benefits without an agreement, order, or decision. Such a suspension of weekly compensation shall take effect only after the Department is notified on a form prescribed by the Department and when the insurer sends a written notice of the suspension to the employee and the employee's legal counsel, if any, by certified mail with a copy of the notice also sent to the department. Suspension cannot be commenced until the date the notice is mailed. Such notice shall state the grounds for the suspension and, except as to suspensions pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152, § 11A, shall contain notification of the re-examination date. The re-examination shall be scheduled to occur not less than seven days nor more than 21 days from the date of notice of the suspension. Such notice shall also instruct the employee that attendance at, and cooperation with, the re-examination shall result in reinstatement of weekly benefits and payment of benefits withheld during the period of such suspension.

Should the claimant fail to appear at the re-examination, or in any way obstruct, or fail to cooperate at such re-examination, the suspension shall continue until an administrative judge makes a determination whether benefits should be forfeited.

- (2) No suspension of benefits shall be allowed on the basis of an employee's failure to meet with a vocational rehabilitative specialist within the Department pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152, § 45 without the written authorization of the Office of Education and Vocational Rehabilitation.
- (3) An insurer seeking to discontinue benefits in accordance with M.G.L. c. 152, § 35E shall file a complaint in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. c. 152, § 7G. An insurer may not unilaterally discontinue benefits under M.G.L. c. 152, § 35E.

452 CMR: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS

1.06: continued

- (4) An insurer, without the requirement of an order under M.G.L. c. 152, § 10A, may suspend or take credit for any compensation due to the extent of any excess retained by or paid to an employee in connection with a settlement approved in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. c. 152, § 15.

1.07: Claims and Complaints

- (1) A claim for compensation may be filed by any person, including an employee, dependent, physician, hospital or other health care provider, who believes that benefits are due under M.G.L. c. 152.

- (2) Pursuant to the provisions of M.G.L. c. 152, § 7G, the following documentation must be attached to a claim for benefits, or complaint for modification or discontinuance of benefits before it will be processed by the Office of Claims Administration:

- (a) Any claim for a recalculation of the compensation rate under M.G.L. c. 152, § 1 shall be accompanied by one or more of the following:

1. an affidavit attesting to the reasons why the weekly rate is incorrect;
2. a wage schedule of the employee or an affidavit attesting that a demand for a wage schedule was upon the employer, concurrent employer and/or insurer without success, together with a brief recitation of why the claimant alleges the average wage is inaccurate and why the wage schedule is needed;
3. all relevant pay stubs;
4. a W-2 tax form or any of the above documents for a comparable worker where the employee has worked only a short time for the employer prior to the date of injury.

Where concurrent employment is at issue, documentation as listed above shall be furnished for all concurrent employers, together with an affidavit attesting to the name of the concurrent employer and its insurer during the relevant period of concurrent employment.

- (b) Claims for penalties under M.G.L. c. 152, § 8(1) shall be accompanied by a copy of the order, decision, arbitrator's decision, approved lump sum or other agreement or other relevant document(s) with which it is alleged the insurer has failed to comply, together with an affidavit signed by the claimant or the claimant's attorney attesting to the date payment was due, the date, if any, on which payment was made, and the amount of the penalty the claimant is owed.

- (c) 1. Claims for payment for adequate and reasonable health care services shall, where applicable, be accompanied by the following:

- a. the dates of service;
- b. the type of treatment or service and the itemized costs;
- c. office notes, hospital records, or a statement from the attending physician or medical vendor that such visit, testing, prescription drug, therapy, or ancillary medical service device or aid was reasonable, necessary, and causally related to the injury for which the employee is eligible for benefits.

2. Claims for mileage reimbursement necessarily incidental to the provision of adequate and reasonable medical services shall be accompanied, where applicable, by the following:

- a. an itemized bill confirming the date and location of treatment;
- b. an affidavit from the claimant or the claimant's attorney attesting to the exact mileage from the employee's home to the site of the treatment and back, and, except where the travel is incidental to an examination requested by the insurer or the department, the purpose of the treatment and reason for the trip;

1.07: continued

c. copies of parking receipts, canceled checks or receipts, together with documentation from the provider, except where the travel is incidental to an examination requested by the insurer or the Department, relating the service to the industrial injury and deeming it reasonable and necessary.

All bills presented shall, where possible, contain treatment codes, the percentage of reimbursement to which the hospital is entitled and the provider's tax identification number.

(d) All claims for payment of an attorney's fee shall be accompanied by an order, decision, arbitrator's decision, lump sum or other agreement for compensation, or, where necessary, a memorandum outlining the circumstances giving rise to the entitlement of an attorney's fee under the appropriate subsection of M.G.L. c. 152, §§ 10B or 13A. Where necessary expenses have not been paid, a memorandum shall also outline the nature and amount of the expenses and be accompanied by receipts or proof of expenditures. Each claim shall be accompanied by an affidavit signed by the attorney attesting that payment of an attorney fee is owed and that the insurer has refused or neglected to pay the fee after being notified by certified mail that the fee and/or necessary expenses are owed and unpaid and that 14 days have passed since said notice was received.

(e) Claims for payment of funeral expenses shall be accompanied by an itemized funeral bill together with a copy of a death certificate.

(f) Claims for benefits under M.G.L. c. 152, § 31 shall be accompanied by a copy of a death certificate and the documentation required for filing a dependency benefit claim under M.G.L. c. 152, § 35A. Claims for benefits under M.G.L. c. 152, §§ 34, 34A and 35 shall be accompanied by a copy of a physician's report or record not more than six months old that describes the extent and duration of the employee's physical or emotional incapacity for work and which relates said incapacity to the claimed industrial injury.

(g) All claims for cost-of-living adjustments pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152, §§ 34B and 35F shall be accompanied by an affidavit attesting to the date of injury under which the employee is collecting weekly compensation, the present section of M.G.L. c. 152 under which benefits are being paid, and the date of eligibility for the commencement of the claimed cost-of-living adjustments. This affidavit must be signed by the claimant or claimant's counsel. The claim must also be accompanied by a signed release for the Social Security office on form CR-28 (Commonwealth of Massachusetts Cost of Living Adjustment Data Form).

(h) In any claim in which M.G.L. c. 152, § 35A is the only benefit claimed and where dependency is requested for dependents who are conclusively presumed to be dependent under M.G.L. c. 152, § 35A, the claim shall be accompanied, where applicable, by a copy of one or more of the following:

1. the marriage license and a notarized statement from the dependent's spouse confirming that the spouse was living with the employee at the time of the injury;
 2. birth certificates for each child under 18, or, if over 18, an affidavit attesting to the circumstances under which the child qualifies as a dependent under M.G.L. c. 152, § 35A(c);
 3. any court order or decree or court approved agreement requiring the employee to pay child support; or
 4. an affidavit by a parent of an unmarried child under the age of 18 attesting to the parent's dependency upon the support of the child.
- (i) 1. All claims for functional loss under the provisions of M.G.L. c. 152, § 36 or § 36A shall include a physician's report which indicates that a maximum medical improvement has been reached and which contains an opinion as to the percent of permanent functional loss according to the American Medical Association's guide to physical impairment. There shall also be a statement from the claimant, or the claimant's attorney or other authorized representative indicating the specific monetary value of the benefit award being sought as reflected by the opinion of the physician's accompanying report. No claim for functional loss may be filed sooner than six months following an injury or the latest surgery resulting from the injury.

1.07: continued

2. All claims for scarring or disfigurement under M.G.L. c. 152, § 36(k) or § 36A shall be accompanied by a physician's report, operative note, or other hospital record, describing the area of scarring or disfigurement in detail, including its length, size, and exact location, and a signed written statement by the claimant or the claimant's counsel indicating the specific monetary value of the benefit award being sought. The claimant or his counsel shall also include in the signed written statement a detailed description of the nature and quality of the scarring or disfigurement, including color of the scar, and whether or not it has visible stitch marks or other visible, anatomical deformities, or, in the alternative, a dated color photograph which is of reasonable clarity and which depicts a ruler, tape or other measuring device placed in proximity of the scar being claimed which can be clearly seen by someone viewing the photograph, showing the length of scar being claimed. No claims for scarring and disfigurement may be filed sooner than six months following the date of injury or the surgery which is the basis of the claim for scarring or disfigurement, except that disfigurement claims relating to limbs or use of canes may not be filed before an end medical result has been reached.

(j) A complaint requesting modification or discontinuance of benefits made pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152, § 10 shall be accompanied, where applicable, by the following documentation:

1. hospital and medical records;
2. physician's report(s) opining work capacity which shall be no more than six months old;
3. an investigator's report or a synopsis which contains information indicating that the employee is working or exhibiting the capability of working, where the report is the sole basis for discontinuance;
4. wage records demonstrating employment of the employee during the period compensation was collected;
5. a job description of any work offered to the employee when accompanied by a medical report which contains a physician's opinion that the employee is capable of doing such work;
6. a brief memorandum or affidavit specifying the basis for the request to modify or terminate benefits.

(k) A complaint requesting recoupment pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152, § 11D(3) shall be accompanied by a copy of the decision of an administrative judge or court of the Commonwealth indicating that an overpayment has been made and an affidavit by the insurer attesting that weekly benefits are no longer being paid to the employee so that unilateral reduction cannot be implemented.

(l) A claim requesting reimbursement under M.G.L. c. 152, §§ 37 and 37A shall be made on a form prescribed by the Department which shall be accompanied by both a certificate stating that it was served on the Office of Legal Counsel, and by a petition which sets forth and documents items which include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Employee's job description and duties; educational, military, and employment history; and, vocational training prior to the "subsequent impairment" (i.e. compensable personal injury for which petitioner seeks M.G.L. c. 152, §§ 37 through 37A reimbursement; also known as "second injury.")
2. Evidence of employer's knowledge of employee's pre-existing physical impairment due to a previous accident, disease or congenital condition as evidenced by such documents as a job application, a pre-employment physical report, or by employer's affidavit attesting that employer knew of the impairment not later than 30 days after the date of employment, or (for injuries occurring prior to December 23, 1991) by medical records which existed prior to the date of the subsequent impairment.
3. Evidence that a known pre-existing physical impairment was, or was likely to be, a hindrance or obstacle to employment (i.e. medical records evidencing permanent physical restrictions, documented job modifications or accommodations which employer made on behalf of employee).
4. All medical records pertaining to the subsequent impairment including attending physician reports, insurance medical examinations, and DIA impartial physician report.
5. From the compensation claim involving the second injury, copies of all DIA documents which substantiate the reimbursement which the petitioner seeks, such as:

1.07: continued

- a. Employee Claim Form (110)
 - b. First Report of Injury
 - c. Agreement(s) to Compensation
 - d. Conference Orders, Hearing Decisions and Lump Sum Agreement
6. Indemnity record for all reimbursable compensation paid after the 104th week from the date of the onset of disability or death that clearly identify the claimant, the section under which compensation was paid, the dates for which payment was made, and the amount of weekly compensation.
7. Medical bills paid for all related reimbursable medical treatment received by employee after the 104th week from the date of the onset of disability. (Computer printouts which clearly identify the claimant, the service providers, and the dates of service constitute satisfactory documentation).
8. A description of the subsequent impairment which includes an authoritative medical statement as to how the subsequent impairment is substantially greater (by the combined effects of such impairment and subsequent personal injury) than the disability that would have resulted from the subsequent personal injury alone, or that the subsequent injury was caused by the pre-existing impairment, and, if death results from the subsequent injury, that the death would not have occurred except for such pre-existing physical impairment.
- (m) All claims and complaints alleging M.G.L. c. 152, §§ 8 and/or 14 must specify the individual subsections under M.G.L. c. 152, §§ 8(1), 8(5), 14(1) or 14(2) or the claim or complaint shall be administratively withdrawn.
- (n) Claims for penalties under M.G.L. c. 152, §8(5) shall be accompanied by an affidavit stating the penalty being claimed and the basis for the alleged claim.

1.08: Conciliation

- (1) A conciliation held pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152, § 10, shall be presided over by a conciliator within the Division of Dispute Resolution. The conciliation shall be informal. The conciliator shall meet with the parties jointly and may, in his discretion, meet with each party separately.
- (2) Failure of any party to appear at a conciliation with any information requested by the Department shall bar the introduction of such information in any subsequent conference, unless good cause is shown at such subsequent conference why such information was not produced at the conciliation.
- (3) A party to a conciliation may be represented by any person bearing written authority to sign agreements as to compensation for such party. Any person who is not a party or who does not bear such authority may attend a conciliation only with the consent of all parties.
- (4) No conciliator shall be called to testify at any proceeding within the Division of Dispute Resolution regarding any issue which has come before him as a conciliator.
- (5) Before a conciliator can refer an insurer's complaint to modify or discontinue compensation benefits to the Industrial Accident Board, the insurer must have provided to the employee or the employee's designee, a copy of the wage schedule upon which weekly benefits are being paid. Alternatively, the insurer shall furnish an affidavit signed by a representative of the insurer stating that the wage schedule has been requested by the insurer, but the insured would not or could not produce a wage schedule. The employee or the employee's attorney may waive such requirement but in no instance shall a delay in obtaining the wage schedule or affidavit generate an attorney's fee where the matter is subsequently resolved at or before any continued conciliation date. Where a conciliator finds that the insurer unreasonably failed to provide such wage schedule or affidavit, the complaint shall be withdrawn without prejudice.
- (6) Whenever a claim or complaint is withdrawn without prejudice pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152, § 10(1), such withdrawal shall not affect the rights of any party under M.G.L. c. 152, § 41.

452 CMR: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS

1.08: continued

- (7) Claims in which liability is contested shall be accompanied by all relevant medical records completed and available to the claimant or the claimant's representative at the time the claim is filed which contain any history of the injury for which treatment is being sought or which contain opinions by medical personnel as to the nature and causation of the injury or condition being treated. Failure to provide such records at the time of conciliation shall be grounds for withdrawal without prejudice of the claim by a conciliator.
- (8) Claims and complaints filed without substantial compliance with the requirements of 452 CMR 1.07(2) shall be withdrawn by the conciliator without prejudice at conciliation unless waived by the opposing party at or before the conciliation.
- (9) A claim for reimbursement under M.G.L. c. 152, §§ 37 and 37A will be scheduled for conciliation in the Boston Office unless the parties agree in writing, at the time of filing, that it is to be adjudicated at a specified regional office.

1.09: Assignment to Division of Dispute Resolution

- (1) The referral fee under M.G.L. c. 152, § 10, in each case in which the insurer fails to appear for a scheduled conciliation shall be 130% of the average weekly wage in the Commonwealth. All referral fees under M.G.L. c. 152, § 10 shall be computed according to the average weekly wage in the Commonwealth at the time of payment.
 - (a) An insurer who is aggrieved by the assessment of a referral fee of 130% of the average weekly wage in the Commonwealth may seek an administrative review by the conciliation manager within 30 days of the issuance of the bill and shall include any relevant documentation with such request. A conciliator's assertion that an insurer was absent for a scheduled conciliation shall be final, and the review shall be limited to the issues of whether the higher assessment was a mistake and, if not a mistake, whether the absence of the insurer was beyond such insurer's control. Said manager shall make a finding within 30 days of receipt of a documented request for review.
 - (b) An insurer who is aggrieved by the finding of said manager shall have 14 days from receipt of said finding to request a hearing before the Commissioner or his designee, who shall schedule such hearing in Boston within 30 days of receipt of such request. At the hearing the employer shall be given the right to be represented by counsel. The issues at such hearing shall be limited to those that may be considered in the administrative review. The hearing shall not be subject to rules of evidence.
 - (c) No insurer shall be granted more than one administrative review for any referral of a case to the Division of Dispute Resolution.
 - (d) An insurer's obligation to pay a referral fee shall not delay the forwarding of the claim and the case file to the Industrial Accident Board.
- (2) At any time after the case has been assigned to the industrial accident board, any party may petition the commissioner for a stay of the proceedings for documented reasons beyond the control of such party or his attorney. On any such request, the commissioner may grant a stay for no more than 60 calendar days. A list of all stays shall be compiled quarterly and shall be submitted to the advisory council.
- (3) At any proceeding within the division of dispute resolution, the burden of going forward shall be on the party seeking benefits or on the insurer seeking modification or discontinuance of benefits.
- (4) The responsibility for providing and paying for an interpreter when needed at the M.G.L. c. § 10A conference rests with the party that files the claim or complaint. Thereafter, responsibility for providing and paying for an interpreter, whenever one is needed, rests with the party appealing from the conference order. If both parties appeal from the M.G.L. c. 152, § 10A conference order, the responsibility of providing and paying for such interpreter rests with the party that filed the claim or complaint.

452 CMR: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS

1.10: Conferences

- (1) The administrative judge shall preside over the conference held pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152, § 10A. Such conference shall be informal, and inquiries and investigations shall not be subject to the rules of evidence applied in this Commonwealth.
- (2) The parties shall prepare for submission at the outset of a conference a memorandum setting forth the benefits claimed and the issues in dispute, the facts stipulated, the exhibits to be marked for identification, the names of witnesses to be presented, a summary of their anticipated testimony, the estimated length of the hearing, and such other matter as may be allowed or required. Such memorandum may be amended by the parties, with the leave of the administrative judge, at or before the hearing. At a conference involving a medical issue, the parties shall also identify to the administrative judge as part of the required memorandum:
 - (a) the medical issue(s) in dispute requiring the filing of the requisite fee;
 - (b) a list of documents to be included in the medical records to be sent to an impartial physician; any hypotheticals or disclosure questions to be submitted to the impartial physician upon the judge's approval; identification of a specialty or the names of up to three impartial physicians in order of preference if agreed upon; and the names of any additional physicians anticipated to be requested at hearing to be deposed;
 - (c) any objections to the documents included in the medical records and hypotheticals to be submitted to the impartial physician.
- (3) At a conference, the administrative judge shall make such inquiries and investigations as he deems necessary and shall have the power to require and receive reports of injury, signed statements of the employee and other witnesses, medical and hospital reports and records, and such other oral and written matter as shall enable him to determine whether weekly compensation or medical and hospital bills under M.G.L. c. 152 are due.
- (4) No stenographic transcription or electronic recording shall be made of the conference proceedings under M.G.L. c. 152, § 10A, except that the administrative judge, if he deems it to be in the interest of justice, may require such transcription or recording or, with the consent of all parties, may allow any party, at its own expense, to make a transcription or recording of the proceedings.
- (5) No impartial physician shall be required in disputed matters concerning death and matters where the dispute over entitlement to weekly benefits concerns specific period(s) of prior disability.
- (6) In disputes regarding the extent of incapacity where the parties agree upon both the nature of the impairment as well as the causal relationship between the impairment and the employment, subject to the provisions of M.G.L. c. 152, § 11A(2) and 452 CMR 1.02, the parties may agree in writing at the time of conference that an impartial physician is not required.
- (7) In claims where initial liability has not been established, subject to the provisions of M.G.L. c. 152, § 11A(2) and 452 CMR 1.02, the parties may agree in writing at the time of conference that an impartial physician is not required.
- (8) In cases where no impartial physician is required the requisite fee pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152, § 11A(2) shall not be required.
- (9) No impartial physician shall be required where an administrative judge has determined, based upon the information submitted at the M.G.L. c. 152, § 10A conference, that there is no dispute over medical issues and has so stated in the M.G.L. c. 152, § 10A conference order.

1.11: Hearings

- (1) Unless a late appeal is permitted by the commissioner, as provided by M.G.L. c. 152, § 10A, any appeal from an order of an administrative judge must be filed with the department, on a form prescribed by the department, not later than 14 calendar days from the filing date of said order.
 - (a) Where the appointment of an impartial examiner is required, a party has up to ten calendar days following the filing of the appeal to pay the Department the requisite fee. A request for a waiver of the requisite fee based on indigence shall be filed with the commissioner on a form prescribed by the Department not later than ten calendar days following the filing of the appeal. Where more than one party files an appeal, each shall file timely either the requisite fee or a request for waiver on the prescribed form. The Department shall designate the first check received as the requisite fee required to schedule an examination by an impartial physician. All other checks will be returned.
 - (b) in a multiple insurer claim, all the individual appeal forms shall accompany a cover sheet approved by the Department which identifies all insurers and states the board number of each claim. One check payable to the Department in the amount of the requisite fee appended to the multiple appeal cover sheet with all individual appeal forms presented in a timely manner shall perfect all appeals;
 - (c) in any hearing conducted pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152, § 11 the parties may, consistent with 452 CMR 1.02, at the discretion of the administrative judge, agree in writing or on the record that an impartial physician is not required if such agreement has not been reached at Conference;
 - (d) in any hearing conducted pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152, § 11 where medical issues will be presented to an impartial physician all medical records will be marked for identification only.
 - (e) any hearing conducted pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152, § 11A(2) where medical issues have been presented to an impartial physician shall commence no sooner than one week after receipt of the impartial examiner's report by the parties including the department.
 - (f) In any hearing in which the insurer raises the applicability of the fourth sentence provisions of M.G.L. c. 152, § 1(7A), governing combination injuries, the insurer must state the grounds for raising such defense on the record or in writing, with an appropriate offer of proof.
- (2) Except where events beyond the control of the Department make such scheduling impracticable, the same administrative judge conducting any conference held pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152, § 10A, shall preside over any hearing regarding the matter which is the subject of such conference.
- (3) Before the taking of testimony in a hearing before an administrative judge, the insurer shall state clearly the grounds on which the insurer either has declined to pay compensation, or the grounds on which it seeks modification or discontinuance, provided that such statements are based on grounds and factual basis reported by the insurer or based on newly discovered evidence within the provisions of M.G.L. c. 152, §§ 7 and 8, and 452 CMR 1.00. On all other issues the employee's rights under M.G.L. c. 152 shall be deemed to have been established.
- (4) At a hearing, any testimony of parties and witnesses before an administrative judge shall be given under oath or affirmation. Where the administrative judge finds that testimony should be given through any interpreter, the latter shall give oath to interpret faithfully and impartially.
- (5) In all hearings before an administrative judge the testimony of witnesses shall be taken orally or by deposition. Unless otherwise provided by M.G.L. c. 152, or 452 CMR 1.00, the admissibility of evidence and the competency of witnesses to testify at a hearing shall be determined under the rules of evidence applied in the courts of the Commonwealth. The decision of the administrative judge shall be based solely on the evidence introduced at the hearing.

1.11: continued

(6) At a hearing pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152, § 11 in which the conference appeal was filed prior to July 1, 1992, or in which the case does not involve a dispute over medical issues as defined in 452 CMR 1.02, or in which the administrative judge has made a finding under M.G.L. c. 152, § 11A(2) that additional testimony is required due to the complexity of the medical issues involved or the inadequacy of the report submitted by the impartial medical examiner, a party may offer as evidence medical reports prepared by physicians engaged by said party, together with a statement of said physician's qualifications. The administrative judge may admit such medical report as if the physician so testified, provided that where specific facts are in controversy, the administrative judge shall, on motion by a party, strike any part of such report that is not based on:

- (a) the expert's direct personal knowledge;
 - (b) evidence already in the record; or
 - (c) evidence which the parties represent will be presented during the course of the hearing.
- Pursuant to 452 CMR 1.12(5), any party may, for the purpose of cross-examination, depose the physician who prepared an admitted medical report. After such cross examination, the parties may conduct further examination pursuant to the rules of evidence applied in courts of the Commonwealth.

(7) The administrative judge shall preside over the hearing and shall control the conduct of parties, attorneys, and witnesses. Each party at a hearing may give a brief opening statement and closing argument, and may submit briefs, motions, requests for findings of facts, and requests for rulings of law, within such time as the administrative judge may prescribe. The administrative judge, at his discretion, may require the filing of briefs in such form and within such time as he may direct.

1.12: Discovery and Depositions

(1) On or after the filing of any claim, the claimant may serve on any other party a request to be permitted to enter upon a designated area or areas of the employer's premises for the purposes of measuring, surveying, photographing, testing, sampling, or inspecting any designated object, record, or substance thereon.

(2) On or after the filing of any claim or complaint, any party may serve on any other party, employer or medical provider rendering treatment to the claimant, a request to produce, and permit the party making the request to inspect and copy, any medical notes, treatment reports and employment records to include but not be limited to record of wages earned subsequent to the alleged injury.

(3) Any request submitted under 452 CMR 1.12(1) or (2) shall set forth the item or category of items to be inspected, and describe each item or category with reasonable particularity. Such request shall be accompanied by a statement providing the relevance of the requested information to the instant case. The request shall specify a reasonable time, place, and manner of making the inspection and performing the related acts. The party on whom the request is served shall respond in writing within 20 calendar days after service of the request. The response shall state, with respect to each item or category, that inspection and related activities will be permitted as requested, unless the request is objected to, in which event the reasons for objection shall be stated.

(4) (a) On written motion of an appropriate party, the administrative judge to whom the case has been assigned may require, by the issuance of any order, that any request for discovery, including any request submitted under 452 CMR 1.12(1) or (2), be complied with. Failure to comply with said order without good cause may result in assessment of costs or penalties pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152, § 14.

(b) Any motion relating to discovery must be served upon counsel for the opposing party and the administrative judge. The party receiving the motion shall, within ten days of receipt of the motion, comply with the discovery sought by motion or provide a written response opposing the motion with specificity to the other party and the administrative judge. A hearing on the motion may be required at the discretion of the administrative judge. The administrative judge may rule upon the motion without hearing. All other motions not relating to discovery are exempt from 452 CMR 1.12(4)(b).

1.12: continued

- (5) (a) At a hearing pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152, § 11 in which the conference appeal was filed prior to July 1, 1992, or in which the case does not involve a dispute over medical issues as defined in 452 CMR 1.02, or in which the administrative judge has made a finding under M.G.L. c. 152, § 11A(2) that additional testimony is required due to the complexity of the medical issues involved or the inadequacy of the report submitted by the impartial medical examiner, an administrative judge may authorize the taking of testimony of medical witnesses by deposition. An administrative judge shall authorize the testimony by deposition of the impartial physician. The impartial physician's testimony may not be taken prior to the first scheduled M.G.L. c. 152, § 11 or 11A(2) hearing date as applicable unless authorized by the administrative judge. The administrative judge's authorization of a pre-hearing impartial physician deposition must be in writing. In addition to the impartial physician's deposition, an administrative judge may authorize the submission of medical testimony by deposition on motion by a party or on the judge's own initiative. The required finding on medical complexity and/or inadequacy of the impartial physician's report may be made by the administrative judge prior to the first scheduled M.G.L. c. 152, § 11 or 11A(2) hearing date as applicable. Upon a written request of a party, the administrative judge may authorize such additional medical testimony after receipt of the impartial physician's report due to inadequacy of the report or the complexity of the medical issues involved. The administrative judge's authorization of additional medical testimony must be in the form of a written finding that such testimony is required due to the complexity of the medical issues involved or the inadequacy of the report of the impartial physician. Additional medical testimony may only be authorized pursuant to 452 CMR 1.00.
- (b) Notice of the date, time, and place of the deposition shall be provided to all opposing parties by certified mail not less than seven calendar days before the deposition. The deposition shall be taken for use as medical evidence only and shall be admissible, in whole or in part, in proceedings before an administrative judge. No deposition of an impartial physician may exceed three hours without the agreement of all parties, including the physician, or unless authorized in writing by the administrative judge on a motion by a party. All depositions shall be submitted at the time requested by the administrative judge but no more than 60 calendar days from the close of lay testimony, provided that a party may motion the administrative judge for an extension for cause for no more than 30 calendar days. Any extension shall be authorized in writing by the administrative judge on motion by a party.
- (c) Where an impartial medical examiner who has submitted his or her report is rendered unavailable, or makes him or herself unavailable for deposition, either party may file a motion seeking a ruling that the impartial medical examiner is unavailable. Unless the parties otherwise agree, a ruling of unavailability resulting from reasons other than those stated in M.G.L. c. 152, § 20B, shall result in the striking from the record evidence of the impartial medical examiner's report, and a required ruling of inadequacy authorizing the parties to submit additional medical testimony. Upon such a ruling, the administrative judge shall allow a reasonable extension of time for submission of such additional medical evidence, not to exceed 45 days. The impartial physician's submitted report, however, shall be admitted into evidence at the hearing and shall retain its *prima facie* character notwithstanding the finding of inadequacy.
- (6) Medical witnesses shall be informed, before the taking of their testimony by deposition, of their right to read and sign a transcription of their testimony, or of their right to waive such reading and signing. All objections to questions and all motions relevant to testimony shall be set forth with particularity, and with the reasons in support thereof, and no administrative judge shall be required to rule on any objection or motion unless such reasons or statements have been made.
- (7) An attorney for any party may serve a subpoena, issued by a Notary Public, or by a Justice of the Peace, stating the title of the action, name of the administrative judge, or the senior judge if an administrative judge has not been assigned, and shall command each person to whom it is directed to attend and give testimony or produce documents at a time and place therein specified. The Notary Public or Justice of the Peace shall issue a subpoena or a subpoena for the production of documentary evidence, signed but otherwise in blank, to a party requesting it, who shall fill it in before service. A subpoena may also command the person to whom it is directed to produce books, papers, documents or tangible things designated therein, but the administrative judge, upon motion at or before the time specified in the subpoena for compliance therein, may:

452 CMR: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS

1.12: continued

- (a) Quash or modify the subpoena if it is unreasonably oppressive; or beyond the scope of discovery or seeks documents protected by privilege; or
- (b) Condition denial of the motion upon the advancement of the person in whose behalf the subpoena is issued of the reasonable cost for producing the books, papers, documents or tangible things.

Notice of the subpoena must be given to counsel for each party to the action at least two business days prior to service. At the option of the party, a subpoena commanding the production of documents or other tangible things may include a provision stating that for the convenience of the witness and in lieu of appearance at the proceeding, the requested documents may be provided at a date, time and place specified in the subpoena. Any party receiving documents or other tangible things in response to a Subpoena shall provide a complete copy of the response to all parties to the action prior to commencement of the proceeding. Any documents obtained by subpoena not in compliance with this regulation shall not be admissible in any proceeding except by agreement of the parties, or as allowed by the administrative judge for just cause. Failure to comply with 452 CMR 1.12(7) may subject the attorney to the provisions of M.G.L. c. 152, § 14.

1.13: Medical Reports and Records

(1) Within 14 calendar days of the completion of an initial medical examination by an attending physician of an employee, or of any subsequent examination by such physician indicating a change in the capacity of an employee to work, the physician shall submit to the Department and to each party a medical report. No medical examination shall be deemed to have been completed until all tests ordered have been received by the physician. On the written request of a party, the Department shall send a notice to the physician to make immediate submission of a medical report. Each failure to submit a report within 14 days of receipt of a Departmental notice to submit shall be a separate violation and shall be punished by a fine of \$25.00 provided that:

- (a) No fine shall be levied against physicians employed by the United States Veterans Administration to the extent that such fine would conflict with federal law; and
- (b) No fine shall be levied when compensation has been agreed to, the medical treatment is reasonable and necessary, but payments for the physician's services at reasonable rates in accordance with M.G.L. c. 152, § 13, have not been made within 45 calendar days of the submission of a bill.

(2) On the written request of a party, the Department shall, on receipt of records kept or compiled under M.G.L. c. 111, § 119, cause them to be impounded under seal apart from the main file, to be used only by the administrative judge or Reviewing Board in connection with a proceeding under M.G.L. c. 152. Where such records become evidence in any proceeding, they shall be incorporated in the report by reference only, and in the event of certification under M.G.L. c. 152, § 12, shall be certified and impounded under seal.

(3) Any physician aggrieved by the assessment of a penalty pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152, § 30A, who is aggrieved by any such assessment may seek an administrative review by the Director of Administration within 30 days of the issuance of the fine and shall include any relevant documentation with such request. Said director shall make a finding within 30 days of receipt of a documented request for review. A physician who is aggrieved by the finding of said director shall have 14 days from receipt of said finding to request a hearing before the commissioner or his designee, who shall schedule such hearing in Boston within 30 days of receipt of such request. At the hearing said physician shall be given the right to be represented by counsel, to call witnesses, and to question the director of administration. The hearing shall not be subject to rules of evidence.

1.14: Impartial Physicians

(1) If within ten calendar days of filing the appeal the parties have not selected, or an administrative judge has not appointed, a physician from the impartial physician roster to examine the employee, the impartial unit shall choose a physician as directed by the Senior Judge.

1.14: continued

(2) Once the impartial physician has been selected or appointed, the administrative judge shall submit to the impartial unit all approved medical records, any hypothetical fact patterns and any stipulations of fact for transmission to the impartial physician. No party or representative may initiate direct, *ex parte* communication with the impartial physician and shall not submit any form of documentation to the impartial physician without the express consent of the administrative judge.

The impartial physician may not communicate with the parties unless authorized to do so by the administrative judge, except that a party who wishes to engage the impartial physician to be deposed for the purposes of cross examination may contact the physician or his office for the purpose of scheduling a deposition.

The impartial physician may request medical records and reports from providers who have treated the employee prior to the date of the selection or appointment of the impartial physician. Providers of diagnostic services and testing shall send these records directly to the impartial physician upon request of the impartial physician or of the impartial unit.

Except by leave of the administrative judge, hypothetical questions to the impartial physician must be submitted to the administrative judge within 14 days of the appeal of the conference order.

(3) The filing fee paid pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152, § 11A(2) shall be reimbursed by the Department to each appellant if the parties have agreed pursuant to 452 CMR 1.11(1)(d) that an impartial physician is not required or the matter is resolved by the parties prior to the scheduled impartial examination. Any fee required to be paid to an impartial physician for cancellation of a scheduled impartial examination shall be deducted equally from each appellant's reimbursed filing fee.

(4) A party requesting the appointment of an impartial physician by the Senior Judge under the provisions of M.G.L. c. 152, §8(4) shall be responsible for payment to the impartial physician for the procurement of a report in an amount consistent with criteria developed by the health care services board pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152, §13.

(5) Any payment made by a party to an impartial physician appointed by the Senior Judge under the provisions of the second paragraph of M.G.L. c. 152, § 8(4) shall be reimbursed by the insurer if the report determines that the particular course of medical treatment claimed was appropriate.

(6) Parties precluded by 452 CMR 1.00 from procuring the appointment of an impartial medical examiner under M.G.L. c. 152, § 11A(2) may, by agreement, petition the administrative judge having jurisdiction over the case for the appointment of a impartial physician. If the petition is granted, said impartial physician shall be paid an amount consistent with that approved by the commissioner under M.G.L. c. 152, § 11A(3) by, or amongst, any of the requesting parties.

1.15: Reviewing Board

(1) Notice of Appeal. Any appeal from a decision of an administrative judge must be filed with the Department on the form prescribed by the Department not later than 30 days from the filing date of the decision, unless a late appeal is permitted by the Commissioner as provided by M.G.L. c. 152, § 11C. A copy of the appeal shall be served by mail or in hand on counsel for each party or on each unrepresented party.

(2) Filing Fee. The filing fee or a request for its waiver shall be submitted to the Reviewing Board with the notice of appeal. The filing fee prescribed by M.G.L. c. 152, § 11C shall be 30% of the average weekly wage in the Commonwealth at the time of payment. Any request for a waiver of the filing fee based on indigence shall be filed on a form prescribed by the Department.

(3) Reviewing Board. An administrative law judge may require counsel or *pro-se* litigants to appear for a conference to consider waiver of the filing fee, simplification of the issues on appeal, whether oral argument will be held, and any other matters that may aid in the disposition of the appeal.

1.15: continued

(4) **Briefs.** Unless otherwise ordered by the Reviewing Board, a brief shall be filed by the appellant in all cases in accordance with the following provisions:

(a) **Content.** The brief of the appellant shall contain under appropriate headings and in the order here indicated:

1. A statement of the issues presented for review; stated with particularity. A statement that the decision on review is beyond the scope of the administrative judge's authority, arbitrary or capricious, or contrary to law, without more, shall not constitute a proper statement of the issues presented for review.
2. A statement of the case, which shall first indicate briefly the nature of the case, the course of proceedings and its disposition following conference and hearing. There shall follow a brief statement of the facts relevant to the issues presented for review, with appropriate references to the record;
3. The argument, which shall contain the contention of the appellant with respect to the issues presented, supporting rationale and citations to the authorities, statutes, rules, regulations and parts of the record on which the party relies. The Reviewing Board need not decide questions or issues not argued in the brief. If oral argument is permitted nothing argued in the brief shall be deemed to be waived by a failure to argue the issue orally;
4. A short conclusion stating the precise relief sought; and
5. The names, addresses and telephone numbers of counsel and their firms.

(b) **Length and Form of Briefs.** All briefs and appendices shall be produced as follows:

1. Except by permission of an administrative law judge, briefs shall not exceed 30 pages, exclusive of pages as may contain a table of contents, tables of citations and any addendum containing statutes, rules or regulations. Permission shall not be granted unless the moving party specifies the relevant issue or issues and why such issues merit additional pages.
2. All briefs and appendices shall be produced by any duplicating or copying process that produces a clear black image on white paper, which shall be eight and one-half inches in width and eleven inches in height. The top, bottom, left and right margins shall be at least one inch. The typeface shall be 12 point Courier font or larger size and not exceeding 10.5 characters per inch. Text shall be double-spaced, except that argument headings, footnotes and indented quotations shall be single-spaced. The text may appear on both sides of the page, but the numbered pages of text shall not exceed the page limit set for the brief.
3. An administrative law judge may, on behalf of the reviewing board, accept briefs filed which are not in substantial compliance with these rules.

(c) **Statutory Provisions.** If determination of the issues presented requires consideration of statutory provisions, rules or regulations, or when an appeal involves the application of amendments to M.G.L. c. 152, the parties shall reproduce all relevant sections of the original act and any later amendments, including all provisions regarding applicability and effective dates.

(d) **Citations.** References to decisions and other authorities shall include, in addition to the page at which the decision or section begins, a page reference to the particular material on which reliance is placed, and the year of the decision or other authority.

(e) **Amicus Curiae.** An *amicus curiae* shall notify the Reviewing Board of its intention to file a brief.

(f) **Response Briefs.** The brief of the appellee, cross-appellant or *amicus curiae* shall conform to 452 CMR 1.15(4)(a) and (b) with the exception that a statement of issues shall not be made unless the appellee or *amicus curiae* is dissatisfied with the statement of the appellant.

(g) **Designation of Parties.** In their briefs and oral arguments, counsel shall keep to a minimum references to parties by such designations as "appellant" and "appellee," instead using the designation used in the administrative judge's decision, the actual names of the parties, or descriptive terms such as "the employee", "the employer", and "the insurer".

(h) **Time for Filing.** Appellant shall file its brief 30 days after receipt of notification from the Reviewing Board that it is due. The appellee, cross-appellant or *amicus curiae* shall file its brief within 20 days of receipt of the appellant's brief. A reply brief may be filed by the appellant 20 days thereafter. No further briefs shall be filed without leave of the Reviewing Board. When there are cross-appeals, the party that files its appeal first shall be considered the appellant for the purpose of complying with the time requirements for the filing of briefs.

1.15: continued

- (i) Extension of Time. A request for an extension of time to file a brief shall be filed in writing with the Reviewing Board and shall state the length of extension requested and the specific reason for the request.
 - (j) Copies of Briefs. The original and four copies of each brief shall be filed with the reviewing board unless the Reviewing Board by order shall direct a different number to be filed. One copy shall be served by mail or in hand on counsel for each party or on each unrepresented party.
- (5) Dismissal of Appeal. The Reviewing Board may dismiss an appeal or cross-appeal for the following reasons:
- (a) Failure of the appellant, without good cause, to file a brief, unless filing has been waived by the Reviewing Board;
 - (b) Failure of the appellant or cross-appellant to submit a filing fee or a fee waiver form;
 - (c) Failure of the appellant or cross-appellant to appear at oral argument without good cause.
- (6) Oral Argument. If it elects to hear oral argument, the Reviewing Board shall advise all parties and any amicus curiae of the time and place of hearing. A request for postponement of the argument shall be made by motion filed reasonably in advance of the date fixed for hearing. The appellant shall argue first. Each party shall be allowed 15 minutes for argument unless the time is extended or limited by the Reviewing Board. In advance of oral argument, a party may request additional time, which will be granted only under unusual circumstances.
- (7) Withdrawal of Appeal. The parties to any case pending before the Reviewing Board shall notify the Reviewing Board in writing of any settlement, withdrawal of appeal, adjustment or other disposition.

1.16: Copies of Orders, Decisions, and Memoranda of Agreements

A request for a certified copy of an order or decision of an administrative judge or the Reviewing Board, or a memorandum of agreement, and all papers in connection therewith required by M.G.L. c. 152, § 12, shall be accompanied by a payment of no less than \$10.00 when the actual cost of copying said documents exceeds \$10.00, the party requesting said copies shall be billed for the additional cost and shall remit the additional charge.

1.17: Ex Parte Communications

No party or representative of a party involved in a proceeding before an administrative judge or Reviewing Board shall submit to the administrative judge or Reviewing Board any information, evidence, argument, or advice, whether written or oral, regarding any matter at issue in such proceeding unless such submission is part of the record or made in the presence of all parties. When a party to a proceeding submits a letter or any writing to an administrative judge or the Reviewing Board, a copy shall be served by mail or in hand on counsel for each other party or directly on each other party if not represented.

1.18: Practice Before the Department

- (1) Any attorney admitted to practice before the courts of the Commonwealth may practice before the Department.
- (2) In any proceeding before the Department, any person not admitted to practice before the courts of the Commonwealth may appear and act for himself, or for a partnership of which he is a member, or for a corporation of which he is an officer, or for anybody from whom he has written authorization to represent on file with the Department on a form prescribed by the Department.

452 CMR: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS

1.18: continued

- (3) An attorney, or other authorized representative may, without leave, withdraw as representative by filing a written notice of withdrawal, with copies to all parties, provided that such notice is accompanied by the appearance of a successor representative. Under all other circumstances, leave of the administrative judge, or administrative law judge having jurisdiction over an active proceeding must be obtained. In cases where no judge has active jurisdiction leave must be obtained from the office the senior judge.
- (4) Whenever an attorney appears at a proceeding, who:
 - (a) is not the attorney of record, or
 - (b) is not an attorney who, pursuant to his or her registration with the Board of Bar Overseers, shares the same business/professional address as the present attorney of record, the attorney must file a written notice of appearance on a form prescribed by the Department prior to addressing the board in the proceeding. Where more than one attorney has filed an appearance for a party, all notices will be sent to the attorney who most recently appeared. In all cases, any attorney or qualified representative so appearing, is representing to the Department that she or he possesses full authority to handle any and all aspects of the matter presently pending at the Department.
- (5) The Department may, for cause, deny or suspend the right of any person to practice before it.

1.19: Payment of Attorneys Fees

- (1) Where an attorney's fee is paid by the insurer pursuant to M.G.L. c.152, § 13A, that shall be the only fee permitted and no additional fee shall be charged by the attorney for such services. When the employee's attorney and the insurer agree on a fee and expenses, such fee and expenses shall be deemed to be approved by the administrative judge or Reviewing Board as the case may be. When the employee's attorney and the insurer are unable to agree, the administrative judge or Reviewing Board to whom the case was assigned shall determine the appropriate fee pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152, § 13A.
- (2) An employee and his attorney may agree on a retainer, but only to pay for necessary and reasonable expenses and disbursements related to his representation. Any employee's attorney entitled to a fee paid by the insurer under M.G.L. c. 152, § 13A, shall provide the administrative judge or Reviewing Board with an itemization of any necessary and reasonable expenditures and disbursements related to his services, including expenses and disbursements paid by the employee. The insurer shall reimburse the employee for any such expenses or disbursements approved by the administrative judge or the Reviewing Board.
- (3) When an insurer, at least two days before a conference, or at least five days before a hearing, serves on a claimant or person receiving compensation or the representative of such claimant or person a written offer to pay weekly compensation or compensation under M.G.L. c. 152, §§ 30 or 36, and such offer is not accepted, the insurer shall not be required to pay any fee under M.G.L. c. 152, § 13A, for such conference or hearing, unless the order or decision rendered directs a payment of said weekly or other compensation in excess of that offered. Such an offer may be to pay weekly compensation in an amount less than the amount being paid at the time the offer is tendered provided that, if the compensation is being paid pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152, § 8, and the insurer has a workers' compensation policy in effect for the policy year period in which the offer is made with the employer where the alleged injury occurred, then a wage statement signed by said employer indicating the average weekly wage at the time of such alleged injury shall be attached to the written offer of payment.
- (4) In any proceeding before the Division of Dispute Resolution, the claimant shall be deemed to have prevailed, for the purposes of M.G.L. c. 152, § 13A, when compensation is ordered or is not discontinued at such proceeding, except where the claimant has appealed a conference order for which there is no pending appeal from the insurer and the decision of the administrative judge does not direct a payment of weekly or other compensation benefits exceeding that being paid by the insurer prior to such decision; or

452 CMR: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS

1.19: continued

(5) For purposes of M.G.L. c. 152, § 13A(5), withdrawal by an insurer at or after the hearing shall constitute withdrawal within five working days of the date set for a hearing pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152, § 11. For purposes of M.G.L. c. 152, § 13A(5), the employee shall be deemed to have prevailed when an insurer's M.G.L. c. 152, § 14 fraud complaint is denied and dismissed. For purposes of M.G.L. c. 152, § 13A(6), an employee shall be considered to have prevailed before the Reviewing Board if an insurer has withdrawn after an appeal for review has been filed under M.G.L. c. 152, § 11C.

(6) Nothing in 452 CMR 1.19 shall affect fees paid to an attorney by an employee for services other than those rendered an employee under M.G.L. c. 152.

(7) For the purpose of computing attorneys' fees under M.G.L. c. 152, § 13A, and these rules, the average weekly wage in the Commonwealth shall be such wage on the date the order or decision is rendered, or the date the insurer accepts the claim or withdraws its request for modification or termination.

(8) For injuries occurring before November 1, 1986, fees of attorneys for representation of employees under M.G.L. c. 152 shall be subject to the approval of an administrative judge or Reviewing Board. If the employee and attorney cannot agree as to the attorney's fee, either party may notify the Division of Dispute Resolution which shall assign the case for a conference and/or hearing.

1.20: Joinder

(1) An administrative judge before whom a proceeding is pending may join, or any party to such proceeding may request the administrative judge to join, as a party, on written notice and a right to be heard, an insurer, employer, or other person who may be liable for payment of compensation to the claimant.

(2) A party to be joined shall not be allowed to raise a defense of late claim if the original claim was filed timely, but shall be allowed to raise any and all other reasonable defenses which would have been available to him had the claimant filed an original claim against the party to be joined, provided that the party requesting joinder, in the absence of mistake or inadvertence, made a reasonable attempt to ascertain the identity of the correct party or parties before the filing of the original claim.

(3) When it is decided, after proper hearing of a request to join, that the subject of such request shall be joined, the new party shall be allowed a reasonable period of time to prepare a defense. Such period shall not exceed 45 calendar days from the date of joinder, unless the administrative judge who orders the joinder finds that additional time to prepare a defense is needed.

1.21: Third Party Liability

(1) When an employee who claims or receives benefits under M.G.L. c. 152 seeks damages from some person or entity other than the employer or its workers' compensation insurer, the employee shall immediately notify the insurer by certified mail of the commencement of the action. Where the workers' compensation insurer proceeds to enforce the liability of such third person, it shall notify the employee in the same manner.

(2) Where the employee or the workers' compensation insurer recovers judgment or reaches a settlement in a civil action in any court, the terms of such judgment or settlement shall be reported immediately to the Department as well as to the appropriate rating bureau as required by M.G.L. c. 152, § 53A(4).

(3) When the parties elect to submit to the jurisdiction of the Department, the settlement by agreement shall be in writing and in conformity with the guidelines and format prescribed by the Department. Approval authority statutorily residing in the Reviewing Board and the Board may be delegated to an individual administrative law judge or administrative judge by the senior judge.

452 CMR: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS

1.21: continued

(4) A hearing on the merits of the proposed settlement will be held if requested by the parties. In the alternative, the parties may waive their right to a hearing and submit the executed settlement agreement to the designated judge for review and disposition, except when a third party settlement is conditioned upon the approval of a lump sum settlement. In that circumstance, a hearing on the merits of both agreements must be heard by the same judge.

1.23: Amendments to Claims and Complaints

(1) A party may amend his claim or complaint as to the time, place, cause, or nature of the injury, as a matter of right, at any time prior to a conference on a form provided by the Department. At the time of a conference or thereafter, a party may amend such claim or complaint only by filing a motion to amend with an administrative judge. Such a motion shall be allowed by the administrative judge unless the amendment would unduly prejudice the opposing party.

(2) A party may amend a claim or complaint on a form provided by the Department as to a party as a matter of right at any time prior to a conference whenever the controversy created by the amended claim or complaint arose out of conduct, incident, or series or occurrences set forth or attempted to be set forth in the original claim or complaint.

(3) No amendment to a claim or complaint may be made except as provided by M.G.L. c. 152 and 452 CMR 1.00. Any party shall be allowed a reasonable period of time to prepare a defense to an amended claim or complaint. Such period shall not exceed 45 calendar days from the date of notice of the amendment, unless an administrative judge finds that additional time to prepare a defense is needed.

1.24: Recoupment of Overpayment

Where an employee is receiving weekly benefits by agreement or by an order or decision, and a subsequent order or decision filed pursuant to M.G.L. c. 152 authorizes retroactive reduction of the weekly compensation rate, but does not terminate weekly benefits, the order or decision shall specifically address the manner or method of recoupment of such overpayment by the insurer.

REGULATORY AUTHORITY

452 CMR 1.00: M.G.L. c. 152, § 5.